

Remarks

The above-identified application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed March 31, 2004. Claims 23-29, 31, 33-42 and 44-53 were pending. By way of this response, claims 23, 38, 47, 48, and 50 have been amended, claims 24-29, 31, 39, 41 and 52 have been cancelled without prejudice, and claim 54 has been added. Support for the amendments to the specification and the claims can be found in the application as originally filed, and no new matter has been added. Accordingly, 23, 33-38, 40, 42, 44-51, and 53-54 are currently pending.

In addition, applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's holding that claims 27 and 41 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

As discussed herein, claims 23, 48, and 50 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 27, and claims 38 and 47 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 41. Thus, applicant submits that all of the rejected claims have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 27 and 41, and therefore, all of the present claims are allowable.

Claim Rejections

Claims 23-24, 26, 28-29, 31, 42, and 48-53 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph and second paragraphs. Claims 23-25, 28, 33-40, 42, 44-45 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being

unpatentable over Oshlack et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,472,712) in view of Bridgeford (U.S. Pat. No. 3,852,224), Traubel et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 3,646,178), and Michaels (U.S. Patent No. 3,615,024). Claims 46-53 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Oshlack et al. in view of Bridgeford, Traubel et al., and Michaels, and further in view of Etani (U.S. Pat. No. 4,692,314).

Applicant does not concede with the remarks made by the Examiner or the rejections of the claims, and applicant reserves the right to traverse the rejections in the future. However, to advance the prosecution of the subject application, claims 23, 48, and 50 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 27, and claims 38 and 47 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 41. The amendments to claims 23, 38, 47, 48, and 50 apply to the claims dependent therefrom. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections as they relate to the amended claims.

As acknowledged in the Office Action, applicant submits that the present claims are sufficiently described and definite to satisfy 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraphs. In addition, applicant submits that the combinations of references fail to disclose, teach, or suggest the present invention. For example, the combinations of references fail to disclose, teach, or even suggest a composition that includes a coating that includes a copolymer made up of about 45% to about 95% by weight of units which are from vinylacetate and about 5% to about 55% by weight of units which are from vinylversatate, as recited in claims 23, 48, and 50, or a coating that includes a copolymer including units obtained from only two different monomers, one

of the two monomers being vinylversatate, as recited in claims 38 and 47.

In addition, each of the present dependent claims is separately patentable over the prior art. For example, none of the prior art disclose, teach, or even suggest the present compositions and methods including the additional feature or features recited in any of the present dependent claims. Therefore, applicant submits that each of the present claims is separately patentable over the prior art.

In view of the above, applicant submits that the present claims, and in particular claims 23, 33-38, 40, 42, 44-51, and 53-54, are unobvious from and patentable over the combination of Oshlack et al. in view of Bridgeford, Traubel et al., and Michaels, or the combination of Oshlack et al. in view of Bridgeford, Traubel et al., and Michaels, and further in view of Etani under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

#### Claim Objections

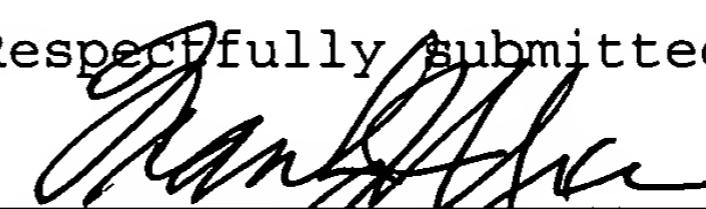
Claims 27 and 41 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

As indicated herein, independent claims 23, 38, 47, 48, and 50 have been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 27 or 41. Therefore, applicant submits the objections have been overcome.

In conclusion, applicant has shown that the present claims satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C § 112, first and second paragraphs, and are unobvious from and patentable over the prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Therefore, applicant submits that the present claims, that is claims 23, 33-38, 40, 42, 44-51, and 53-54 are allowable, and respectfully requests the Examiner to pass the above-identified application to issuance at an early date. Should any matters remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to call (collect) applicant's attorney at the telephone number given below.

Date: JULY 20, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

  
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